

Message Text

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PLAB, FR

SUBJECT: WFTU GENERAL COUNCIL MEETING IN PARIS

7-9 OCTOBER

1. THE ANTI-FRANCO CAMPAIGN AND AGITATION HAS DE-TRACTED ATTENTION FROM THE WFTU GENERAL COUNCIL MEETING IN PARIS 7-9 OCTOBER IN WHICH ALL WFTU AFFILIATES FROM 70 COUNTRIES ARE EXPECTED TO BE REPRESENTED.

THIS IS THE FIRST TIME SUCH A MEETING IS HELD IN PARIS AND COINCIDES WITH THE 30TH ANNIVERSARY OF WFTU

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ESTABLISHMENT IN PARIS IN OCTOBER 1945, AND ALSO OF

80TH ANNIVERSARY OF CGT.

2. ACCORDINGLY, THERE IS BIG RECEPTION SCHEDULED FOR 7 OCTOBER HOSTED JOINTLY BY WFTU AND CGT. US AND UK LABOR COUNSELORS RECEIVED EACH TWO INVITATIONS TO THE RECEPTION. US WILL IGNORE INVITATION BUT UK HAS QUERIED THE FOREIGN OFFICE BUT THERE HAS BEEN NO REPLY YET.

3. THE WFTU GENERAL COUNCIL MEETING REVIVED QUESTION WHETHER WFTU IS STILL SEEKING THE TRANSFER OF ITS HEADQUARTERS FROM PRAGUE TO PARIS, AS WAS REPORTED BY THE EMBASSY IN 1972, AND THAT ABOVE MEETING WILL BE USED BY CGT AS A FOOT IN THE DOOR. WE CHECKED WITH MATIGNON AND WE WERE ASSURED THAT THIS QUESTION HAS NOT BEEN RAISED AGAIN SINCE 1972 AND THAT GOF REMAINS OPPOSED TO SUCH A TRANSFER.

4. MATIGNON SOURCE, HOWEVER, ADDED THAT CGT HAS PETITIONED GOF FOR PERMISSION TO ALLOW WFTU'S METAL WORKERS TRADE DEPARTMENT TO MOVE TO PARIS. THIS REQUEST IS ALREADY A FEW MONTHS OLD BUT GOF IS STILL HOLDING IT UNDER ACTIVE CONSIDERATION. SOURCE IMPLIED THAT MATIGNON IS KEEPING ITS MIND OPEN ON CGT'S REQUEST AND WOULD NOT EXCLUDE A FAVORABLE DECISION IF CGT AND WFTU WOULD MEET CERTAIN UNSPECIFIED CONDITIONS. ASKED ABOUT NEXT WEEK'S WFTU MEETING, SOURCE RESPONDED IN RELAXED MANNER BY SAYING THAT GOF SAW NO OBJECTIONS TO AUTHORIZING IT AS MEANS OF DEMONSTRATING OPEN-MINDEDNESS AND FLEXIBILITY AND OF DEPRIVING CGT AND PCF OF AN ISSUE, ESPECIALLY SINCE THERE WERE NO APPARENT RISKS INVOLVED. HE INVITED LABOR COUNSELOR TO DISCUSS FURTHER THIS ENTIRE ISSUE.

5. UK LABOR COUNSELOR, WHO HAD OPPORTUNITY TO RAISE WFTU PARIS MEETING WITH SENIOR INTERIOR MINISTRY OFFICIAL AT A RECENT LUNCH, TOLD US THAT PONIATOWSKI PERSONALLY APPROVED THE WFTU REQUEST ON EXACTLY THE SAME GROUNDS AS GIVEN BY MATIGNON ABOVE. PONIATOWSKI ASKED THAT CGT BE GIVEN TO UNDERSTAND THAT TRANSFER LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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OF WFTU HEADQUARTERS TO PARIS IS OUT OF THE QUESTION.

6. COMMENT: ALTHOUGH IT SEEMS DIFFICULT TO ARGUE AGAINST GOF'S REASONING IN THIS CASE, FROM THE POINT OF VIEW OF INTERNAL POLITICS THE GRANTING OF PERMISSION TO WFTU TO HOLD SUCH A MAJOR MEETING IN PARIS AND TO CELEBRATE IN THE WEST ITS 3TH ANNIVERSARY REPRESENTS A CONCESSION AND A "QUID" WITHOUT ANY APPARENT "QUO."

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